

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TOKYO 05062 171143Z

51

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C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 5062

LIMDIS

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR JA UR

SUBJ: BREZHNEV LETTER TO PRIMIN TANAKA

REF: A) TOKYO 3829; B) TOKYO 4656; C) TOKYO 4806

SUMMARY: IN LETTER TO TANAKA, BREZHNEV ENDORSED HIGH
LEVEL CONTACTS AND EXPANSION OF RUSSO-JAPANESE RELATIONS,
URGED EARLY AGREEMENT ON SIBERIAN DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS,
BUT INDEFINITELY DEFERRED HIS OWN VISIT TO JAPAN.
LETTER OMMITTED ANY REFERENCE TO PEACE TREATY NEGOTIATIONS.
FONOFF CONCLUDES THAT BREZHNEV FIRST WANTS GOJ TO
CLARIFY ATTITUDE TOWARD NORTHERN TERRITORIES AND NEW
SIBERIAN RAILWAY BEFORE COMMITTING HIMSELF TO VISIT.
SOVS ARE PARTICULARLY PRESSING FOR EARLY RESPONSE ON
RAILWAY BUT ARE UNLIKELY TO GET IT. END SUMMARY.

1. ON APR 11 SOVIET AMBASSADOR TROYANOVSKY DELIVERED
TO PRIMIN TANAKA LETTER FROM BREZHNEV, RESPONDING TO
FORMER'S LETTER DELIVERED MAR 20 (REF A). FONOFF
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PAGE 02 TOKYO 05062 171143Z

FIRST EAST EUROPE DIV HEAD ARAI PROVIDED EMBOFF WITH

FOLLOWING SUMMARY OF BREZHNEV LETTER.

2. LETTER, WHICH WAS CORDIAL IN TONE, CONTAINED FOUR KEY POINTS: (A) BREZHNEV SUPPORTED TANAKA'S PREVIOUSLY EXPRESSED VIEW THAT CONTACTS AT HIGHEST LEVEL ARE MOST USEFUL IN EXPANDING BILATERAL RELATIONS. AS EXAMPLES BREZHNEV CITED SOVIET CONTACTS WITH LEADERS OF US, FRANCE AND FRG. BREZHNEV ADDED THAT SUCH CONTACTS HELP SOLVE BOTH BILATERAL AND MULTILATERAL PROBLEMS. (B) BREZHNEV "CONFIRMED" AGREEMENT (PRESUMABLY JOINT COMMUNIQUE) HE HAD MADE WITH TANAKA AT TIME OF LATTER'S VISIT TO MOSCOW IN OCT 1973, AND EXPRESSED DESIRE TO DEVELOP FURTHER RELATIONS BETWEEN USSR AND JAPAN. (C) BREZHNEV REFERRED TO HIS RECENT TALKS WITH JAPANESE BUSINESS LEADERS NAGANO AND UEMURA (REF C), WHICH HE DESCRIBED AS USEFUL, AND SUGGESTED THAT TIME HAS COME FOR BOTH USSR AND JAPAN TO REACH AGREEMENT ON "SEVERAL" SIBERIAN DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS (HE DID NOT SPECIFY WHICH ONES). (D) WITH RESPECT TO TANAKA'S INVITATION TO VISIT JAPAN, BREZHNEV WROTE THAT HE WOULD LIKE TO COME BUT "IN NEAREST FORESEEABLE FUTURE" SUCH VISIT WAS DIFFICULT BECAUSE OF ALREADY SCHEDULED COMMITMENTS, AND THEREFORE HE WISHED TO RESERVE THIS MATTER FOR DISCUSSION AT SOME OTHER TIME.

3. COMMENTING ON LETTER, ARAI POINTED TO GLARING OMISSION OF ANY REFERENCE TO PEACE TREATY NEGOTIATIONS. ARAI THEN SAID THAT AMB TROYANOVSKY HAD ASKED FOR MEETING ON APR 16 WITH FONOFF VICE MINISTER TOGO. LATTER TOOK OCCASION TO ASK TROYANOVSKY ABOUT BREZHNEV'S FAILURE TO MENTION PEACE TREATY NEGOTIATIONS, BUT TROYANOVSKY DISMISSED OMISSION AS HAVING NO SIGNIFICANCE ONE WAY OR ANOTHER, ADDING THAT USSR WOULD FULFILL "WITH HONOR" TERMS OF TANAKA-BREZHNEV COMMUNIQUE. HOWEVER, SAID TROYANOVSKY, AS FOR POSSIBLE VISIT OF BREZHNEV TO JAPAN, IN ORDER TO PREPARE SERIOUSLY BOTH SIDES MUST STUDY AND ARRANGE CAREFULLY FOR OPTIMUM ACHIEVEMENT ON THAT OCCASION.

4. TROYANOVSKY THEN CAME TO APPARENT POINT OF CALL
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 TOKYO 05062 171143Z

ON TOGO. HE ASKED ABOUT GOJ ATTITUDE TOWARD TYUMEN OIL PROJECT AS LINKED TO CONSTRUCTION OF NEW SIBERIAN RAILWAY, AND STATED THAT USSR WANTS EARLIEST POSSIBLE RESPONSE. TOGO SIMPLY REPLIED THAT IN FIRST INSTANCE THIS WAS MATTER FOR DECISION BY JAPANESE BUSINESS CIRCLES, WHICH HE UNDERSTOOD HAVE PROJECT UNDER STUDY. (COMMENT: TROYANOVSKY'S DEMARCHE OBVIOUSLY DISPROVED ARAI'S EARLIER ESTIMATE (REF B) THAT SOVS WERE DRAWING

BACK FROM EFFORTS TO INVOLVE JAPAN IN RAILWAY CONSTRUCTION.)

5. ARAI SAID FONOFF HAS CONCLUDED THAT BREZHNEV WANTS CLARIFICATION OF GOJ POSITION ON TWO KEY POINTS BEFORE HE COMES TO JAPAN: NORTHERN TERRITORIES AND JAPANESE PARTICIPATION IN CONSTRUCTION OF NEW SIBERIAN RAILWAY. ON LATTER POINT, ARAI SAID THAT FONOFF CONTINUES TO OPPOSE JAPANESE INVOLVEMENT (REF B), SEEING REQUEST AS PART OF LONG-RANGE SOVIET STRATEGY TO ENMESH DEEPLY JAPAN IN SIBERIA AND SUBTLY UNDERMINE RATIONALE OF JAPAN'S SECURITY RELATIONSHIP WITH US.

6. LOOKING BACK, ARAI SAID FONOFF NOW BELIEVES SOVS BEGAN RECONSIDERING THEIR NEGOTIATING STRATEGY ON TUYMEN PROJECT ABOUT ONE YEAR AGO. AT THAT TIME, IN FONOFF VIEW, ALL SERIOUS NEGOTIATIONS WERE SUSPENDED BY SOVIET SIDE. THEN, DURING TANAKA'S OCTOBER 1973 VISIT TO MOSCOW, BREZHNEV EXPLAINED RAILWAY PROJECT BUT DID NOT ASK FOR JAPANESE PARTICIPATION. THIRD STEP OCCURRED IN DEC 1973 WHEN SOVIET OFFICIALS ANNOUNCED THAT OIL DELIVERIES TO JAPAN WOULD BE LIMITED TO 25 MILLION TONS, RATHER THAN 25 TO 40 MILLION TONS PER YEAR AS ORIGINALLY SUGGESTED, AND SIMULTANEOUSLY RUMOR EMERGED THAT SOVS MIGHT PREFER RAILWAY RATHER THAN PIPELINE TO TRANSPORT OIL. ARAI PARTLY BLAMES OVERLY EAGER JAPANESE BUSINESSMEN FOR PROMPTING SOVS TO UP OVERALL ANTE TON SIBERIAN PROJECTS. IN RESPONSE TO EMBOFF'S QUESTION ABOUT ATTITUDES OF BUSINESSMEN TOWARD PARTICIPATION IN RAILWAY CONSTRUCTION, ARAI SAID OPINION IS DIVIDED BUT HE BELIEVES THEY WILL BE SENSITIVE TO INFORMED OPINION. IN THIS CONNECTION, HE NOTED THAT NO JAPANESE NEWSPAPER HAS SUPPORTED PROJECT. (ARAI'S DEPUTY SUGGESTED IN CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 04 TOKYO 05062 171143Z

CONVERSATION WITH EMBOFF PREVIOUS DAY THAT REGARDLESS OF ATTITUDE OF BUSINESSMEN, GOJ WOULD HAVE TO STUDY POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS OF RAILWAY PROJECT "OVER AN EXTENDED PERIOD OF TIME.").

7. ASKED ABOUT OUTLOOK FOR PEACE TREATY NEGOTIATIONS, WHICH BOTH SIDES HAVE AGREED TO COMMENCE IN LATTER HALF OF THIS YEAR, ARAI WAS BEARISH. HE EXPECTS NEGOTIATIONS TO OPEN AS SCHEDULED, BUT THAT TWO SIDES WILL BE SO FAR APART THAT NO SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS WILL BE MADE.

8. COMMENT: ARAI'S ACCOUNT OF THESE RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN SOVIET-JAPANESE RELATIONS WAS TINGED WITH HIS USUAL SKEPTICISM ABOUT SOVIET INTENTIONS. IT WAS CLEAR THAT HE EXPECTS JAPANESE BUSINESSMEN TO CONCLUDE

IN NEAR FUTURE AGREEMENTS ON SIBERIAN PROJECTS (SUCH AS YAKUTSK COAL AND TIMBER DEVELOPMENT) WHICH WILL PROVIDE EARLIEST TANGIBLE RETURN TO JAPAN WITH MINIMUM OF INVOLVEMENT, AND THAT GOJ WILL STALL INDEFINITELY ON RAILWAY BECAUSE OF COST AND FOREIGN POLICY IMPLICATIONS. WITH RESPECT TO PEACE TREATY NEGOTIATIONS, WE NOTE THAT PROGRESS IS ALSO DEPENDENT ON DEVELOPMENTS IN OTHER AREAS, INCLUDING POSTURE OF CHINA AND COURSE OF DETENTE. EDMOND

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